

REMARKS

This application has been reviewed in light of the Office Action dated September 10, 2003. Claims 1, 2, 4-9, 11, 13, 17-19, 21, 22, 24-29, 31, 33, 37-39, 41, 42, 45, 47, and 48 are presented for examination. Claims 1, 21, and 41, the independent claims, have been amended to define still more clearly what Applicants regard as their invention. Claims 2, 11, 13, 17, 22, 31, 33, 42, and 45 have been amended as to matters of form. Favorable reconsideration is requested.

A Claim To Priority and a certified copy of the priority document for this application were filed on May 8, 2000, as evidenced by the returned receipt postcard bearing the stamp of the Patent and Trademark Office, a copy of which is attached hereto. Applicants again respectfully request acknowledgment of the claim for foreign priority and the receipt of the certified copy.

Claims 1, 2, 4-6, 11, 13, 17, 18, 21, 22, 24-26, 31, 33, 37, 38, 40-42, 45, 47, and 48 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,301,013 (*Momose et al.*), in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,453,078 (*Bubie et al.*). Claims 7, 8, 27, and 28 were rejected under Section 103(a) as being obvious from *Momose et al.* in view of *Bubie et al.* as applied to Claims 1, 21, and 41, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,295,136 (*Ono et al.*). Claims 9, 19, 29, and 39 were rejected under Section 103(a) as being obvious from *Momose et al.* in view of *Bubie et al.* as applied to Claims 1, 21, and 41, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,828,461 (*Kubo et al.*). These rejections are respectfully traversed.

In conventional systems, an editing process performed on a selected image is recorded together with the image information. As described in greater detail in the specification, it is not possible in conventional systems to record the editing process

separately from the image information. The present invention performs a desired editing process on an image, wherein a plurality of editing processes are registered as an editing set.

The aspect of the present invention set forth in Claim 1 is an image processing method. The method includes the following steps of deciding layout information for an output image based on at least one frame being positioned at a user-desired position on an output image preview window according to a user designation, and registering an editing set to an editing menu, where the editing set includes the decided layout information and a plurality of editing processes designated by the user. The method also includes identifying an editing set selected from the editing menu, inputting a plurality of images by image inputting means, and displaying the plurality of images in the form of reduced-size images. The further includes selecting at least one image from the plurality of displayed images, and outputting the output image generated by performing the plurality of editing processes, included in the editing set identified in the identifying step, on the at least one image selected in the selecting step and by arranging the selected image at the user-desired position based on the layout information, included in the editing set identified in the identifying step. The editing processes and the layout information thus correspond to the editing set identified in the identifying step, and each frame indicates information of the position to arrange each selected image on the output image.

Among other notable features of the aspect of the present invention that is set forth in independent Claim 1, is deciding layout information for an output image based on at least one frame being positioned at a user-desired position on an output image preview window according to a user designation, where each frame indicates information of the position to arrange each selected image on the output image.

Momose et al. relates to a printing control apparatus and a printing control method that controls printing by a printing device, which is connected, for example, to a personal computer. *Momose et al.* registers print attributes, such as sheet size, orientation, printable area magnification-reduction, layout or watermark printing, in a pull-down menu. In *Momose et al.*, page layout is accomplished by a user selecting one of four displayed options, depicting a page divided into quarters, where each option represents a sequence of a layout arrangement (column 12, line 61 to column 13, line 9, and Figure 8). Accordingly, a user can only select from predetermined layout options. The Office Action cites column 12, lines 10-40, and Figure 7 of *Momose et al.* as disclosing the feature of Claim 1 of deciding layout information for an image based on at least one frame being positioned at a user desired position. Applicants disagree with this understanding of *Momose et al.* The cited passage merely discusses a magnification-reduction option. Nothing has been found in *Momose et al.* that would teach or suggest deciding layout information for an output image based on at least one frame being positioned at a user-desired position on an output image preview window according to a user designation, where each frame indicates information of the position to arrange each selected image on the output image, as recited in Claim 1. Furthermore, at page 3 of the Office Action, it is specifically conceded that *Momose et al.* fails to teach displaying plural reduced-sized images, selecting at least one image from the plural displayed images, and performing editing processes which correspond to the identified editing set on the selected images.

For at least the above reasons, Claim 1 is believed clearly to be allowable over *Momose et al.*, taken alone.

Bubie et al. is not seen to remedy the deficiencies of *Momose et al.* as prior art against Claim 1, particularly with respect to deciding layout information for an output

image based on at least one frame being positioned at a user-desired position on an output image preview window according to a user designation, where each frame indicates information of the position to arrange each selected image on the output image. *Bubie et al.* relates to selecting and arranging multiple digital images from a group of thumbnail images and printing the selected images. The *Bubie et al.* system allows a user to select either a predefined layout or a custom layout template. The custom layout template allows the user to designate the number of rows and columns, together with the horizontal and vertical spacing between each row and column (column 6, lines 9-19, and Figure 6). However, nothing has been found in *Bubie et al.* that would teach or suggest deciding layout information for an output image based on at least one frame being positioned at a user-desired position on an output image preview window according to a user designation, where each frame indicates information of the position to arrange each selected image on the output image, as recited in Claim 1.

Therefore, even if *Momose et al.* and *Bubie et al.* were combined in the manner proposed in the Office Action, assuming such combination would even be permissible, the resulting combination also would fail to teach or suggest at least those features of Claim 1. Accordingly, Applicants submit that Claim 1 is patentable over *Momose et al.* and *Bubie et al.*, taken separately or in any possible combination (if any).

Independent Claims 21 and 41 are apparatus and computer readable storage medium claims respectively corresponding to method Claim 1, and are believed to be patentable for at least the same reasons as discussed above in connection with Claim 1.

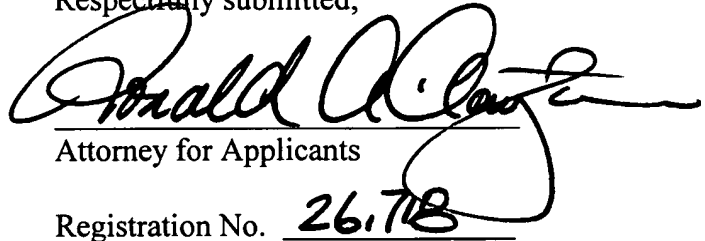
The other claims in this application are each dependent from one or another of the independent claims discussed above and are therefore believed patentable for the same reasons. Since each dependent claim is also deemed to define an additional aspect of

the invention, however, the individual reconsideration of the patentability of each on its own merits is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration and early passage to issue of the present application.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below listed address.

Respectfully submitted,


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